

# *The* STUDENT WRITER

*The Author's Trade Journal*

*July, 1922*

Arthur Stringer

*An Interview by Arthur Chapman*

The Mathematics of a Book

*By William Harlowe Briggs, of Harper & Brothers*

A Handy Market List of Book Publishers

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Of Course!

*By Joseph Andrew Galahad*

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# THE STUDENT WRITER'S Literary Market Tips

Gathered Monthly from Authoritative  
Sources

*Ace-High Magazine*, 799 Broadway, New York, is to be published twice a month beginning with the October number, according to Harold Hersey, editor. "I am on the market," he writes, "for novelettes of from eighteen to twenty-five thousand words dealing with the West, also Western stories of not to exceed five thousand words."

*Detective Stories*, is a new bi-weekly magazine of the Independent Publishers, Incorporated, 854 N. Clark Street, Chicago, who also publish *Radio Instructor* and *Extravaganza*, and distribute *College Humor*. Edwin Baird, editor of *Detective Stories*, writes, "We are in the market for good short-stories of 2000 to 6000 words, novelettes of 10,000 to 15,000 words, and two-part stories of 20,000 to 30,000 words. We want thrilling stories of dramatic action, strength of plot, mystery and suspense. Our stories must capture readers' interest with the first sentence and hold it firmly until the last word. Preference will be given to stories that are simply written, well constructed, and which deal in a realistic way with contemporary American life. *Detective Stories* will make its first appearance with the first September issue. We are prepared to pay a fairly good rate for acceptable stories."

*Telling Tales*, 799 Broadway, New York, has been sold by the Readers Publishing Corporation to the Climax Publishing Corporation, Fred Schiverea, president. The new address of the magazine is 80 E. Eleventh Street, New York. Susan Jenkins has become editor of *Telling Tales*.

*Leslie's Weekly*, and *Judge* have been combined and will appear under the name of *Judge*, according to an announcement by William Green, president of the Leslie-Judge Company. *Leslie's* was founded in 1855 and *Judge* in 1881.

*Brentano's*, Fifth Avenue and Twenty-seventh Street, New York, book publishers, offer a market for novels of a preferred length of 80,000 words; books of a serious nature of all lengths; and occasional well-written juveniles. J. T. Rogers of the publishing department writes: "To all writers our message is that we want good manuscripts and we read all that come into our office. But we want the writer first to think that his work is good. Let him place himself as nearly as possible in the position of the reader, asking himself: 'Would I read this book?' Frankly, we receive a great many manuscripts, the authors of which could not answer this question in the affirmative; that is, they hope to 'put something over' on us. *Brentano's* wants honest work and good work, and we are more than glad to see the honest and good work of virile Western writers, new or experienced.

We want well-written, well-conceived books, worthy of the *Brentano* imprint. We have no place for cheap, trashy, sensational stories. *Brentano's* rarely purchases a manuscript outright, preferring to pay in royalties."

*Sea Stories*, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York, uses the type of stories which the name implies, H. W. Ralston, editor, writes: "We want stories of the sea; short stories of 5000 to 7000 words, novelettes of 12,000 to 25,000 words; serials of 40,000 to 80,000 words. We cannot use editorials, articles, jokes, skits, or anecdotes. We do not want any first person stories, or reminiscences of old tars. We pay on acceptance at rates varying with the quality of the material."

*Broadway Productions, Inc.*, New York, George W. Lederer, president, announces a play contest for this year, in which a \$1,000 bonus will be given to the playwright whose work is adjudged the best piece of craftsmanship, regardless of its appeal to the public.

*The Musician*, formerly of 2720 Grand Central Terminal, has been purchased by Paul Kempf and moved to 5941 Grand Central Terminal, New York. Mr. Kempf writes that he is in the market for articles of about 500 words length, along the lines of musical education, for students and teachers. Payment is on publication at from \$3 to \$5 per article.

Hamilton Holt, according to a correspondent, has resigned as editor of *The Independent*, 140 Nassau Street, New York.

*Musical America*, 501 Fifth Avenue, New York, Alfred Human, managing editor, writes: "We are so overwhelmed with material that we will not be able to use any special contributions on general subjects for a couple of months. We are always glad, however, to consider technical articles and stories of pedagogic interest, written by authorities. We pay quite a liberal rate for contributions, ranging from \$3.50 to \$6.00 a column, and frequently more. Most of the interviews are written by members of our staffs, in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and other cities in which we maintain regular staffs. We are always glad, however, to consider interviews with celebrities outside the musical profession, dealing with their musical experience or reaction to music."

Professor Walter B. Pitkin of Columbia University announces a project whereby it is hoped that the short story can achieve the literary and ethical importance of the novel. His plan is to induce various authors to join in writing stories around a single topic, which will then be published in

book form. "The result will show something of that inner unity which is the glory of the good novel," he states, "but it will exhibit a variety of reactions which no novel can match. The deeper the initial harmony of the contributors and the firmer the editorial guidance, the more striking must these two virtues become. I am beginning a test of this idea and shall continue it as long as American writers and their readers support it. For the first few volumes I am choosing topics drawn from the most important manifestations of contemporary American life, such as the mob spirit, the clash of races, the rise of classes, the post-war outburst of intolerance, our deeper moral confusions, and the stirring of a new American spirit. Each story must be at once realistic and interpretative. It must present a clear picture of things as they are, and it must also construe the picture just enough to enable a cultured foreign reader to understand it as a revelation of something important in our national life. There must be in each story some fairly typical character and some well-defined environment, each dynamically related to the other. Obviously the success of my experiment depends primarily upon the support of those writers who have something serious to say about manners and morals of our day and land. From all such I wish to hear."

*The Ronald Press Company*, book publishers, 20 Vesey Street, New York, writes: "We are in the market for careful studies of business problems pertaining to business operations and business administration, college and secondary business textbooks. It will do authors no good to send us dramatized stuff or articles that talk about business."

*Better Health*, Elmhurst, Illinois, desires fictional stories of 1500 to 6000 words instead of 150 to 600 words as a typographical error in the June STUDENT WRITER made it appear. "We would say that stories from 1000 to 3000 words would be admirable from our readers' standpoint," writes E. C. Crane of the editorial staff, in bringing the mistake to our attention.

*Illustrated World*, Drexel Avenue and Fifty-eighth Street, Chicago, Fred Gilman Jopp, editor, writes: "We are in the market for mechanical and novel articles of 200 to 1000 words, short-stories of the success type from 1000 to 2000 words and a few very good editorials. What we want is good live stuff. We have no use for any fiction. We pay on acceptance at rates of from 1 to 3 cents per word."

B. C. Meade, 53 N. Washtenaw Avenue, Chicago, writes: "I am in the immediate market for fifty-word talks, two- or four-line clever epigrams and short catchy paragraphs. These must be pertinent to men's clothing and haberdashery. I will pay one dollar each for all those accepted and return those I am unable to use. Payment will be made on acceptance."

*Boy's Magazine*, 5146 Main Street, Smethport, Pennsylvania, requests that no manuscripts be submitted, as it will not be in the market for material of any kind for some time.

(Continued on Page 10)

## Prize Contests

*Harper & Brothers*, publishers, Franklin Square, New York, offer a \$2000 prize-novel competition "to encourage young writers to the production of serious fiction of book length." To the author of the best novel submitted to the company before March 1, 1923, *Harper & Brothers* will pay an outright sum of \$2000 as a prize, in addition to the regular terms of royalty which will be arranged with the author. Some of the conditions of the competition are as follows: Any author shall be eligible for the prize who is an American citizen and who has not published a novel in book form prior to August 1, 1914. Only manuscripts submitted between June 1, 1922, and March 1, 1923, and accompanied by a declaration from the author that they are submitted in competition for the prize, shall be considered. The successful work shall be chosen from among manuscripts accepted by *Harper & Brothers* for publication and the prize shall be in addition to and independent of the royalty to be arranged for in the usual way. No manuscripts of less than 30,000 words will be considered and preference will be given to works of full novel length. The judges are Jesse Lynch Williams, president of the Authors' League of America; Henry Seidel Canby, Editor of *The Literary Review*; and Carl Van Doren, author of "The American Novel."

*Kenyon College* of Gambier, Ohio, offers a \$100 prize for the best essay on "Gorgo, Romance of Old Athens," by Charles Kelsey Gaines. Students of all universities in the United States and Canada are eligible to compete. All essays must be submitted not later than December 1, 1922. A limit of four thousand words is set as a maximum.

*The Lyric West*, 1139 W. Twenty-seventh Street, Los Angeles, offers two prizes to be awarded in January, 1923—a \$100 prize for the best long narrative poem or group of poems, and a \$50 prize for the most distinctive short poem published by the *Lyric West* during 1922. Owing to the large amount of material now on hand, this magazine will not consider any manuscripts between June 15th and September 15th.

*Screenland*, 5540 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, California, offers prizes for 500-word essays on "A Close-up of Hollywood, at Noonday or Evening." The essays may be humorous or serious. For the published essays 5 cents per word will be paid. In addition, framed pictures of Hollywood will be given as prizes for the best six. Contest closes July 15, winners to be published in September number. Address manuscripts to "Essay Editor." Particulars in July *Screenland*.

Columbia University, New York, offers a \$500 prize for the best book of poems for 1921. Members of the Academy of Arts and Letters will be the judges.

*Motor Life*, 25 West 45th Street, New York, has been sold to a new company. New life is to be put into the magazine. Severin S. Glass is the new business manager and will for a time act as editor. Touring articles are wanted. Prize contests for best touring and motoring photos will be conducted.



# THE STUDENT WRITER

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## A SYMPOSIUM ON "WRITING FOR THE TWO MILLION"

**T**HE prediction made last month, that the article by Julian Kilman on "Writing for the Two Million" would arouse a storm of comment, has been more than fulfilled. In fact, Mr. Kilman's suggestions for "commercializing" and satisfying the editors and public by deliberately writing "one-formula" stories, drew several letters from fellow authors. Among the most interesting are those written by William MacLeod Raine, novelist, and Howard R. Marsh and Edwin Hunt Hoover, short-story writers.

The opinions of these successful authors, and others, if space permits, will be published in the August STUDENT WRITER. They will help to make it, we believe, one of the most fascinating issues of the magazine ever put forth.

Another article by Professor Walter B. Pitkin, widely quoted authority on the short-story, will appear in the August issue. Professor Pitkin's article in the May issue, outlining a systematic method for evolving plot ideas, was one of the most popular features published in THE STUDENT WRITER. It drew a great many appreciative letters, and is especially interesting in view of the interview with Arthur Stringer in the present issue, which reveals that the novelist employs very much the same methods that Professor Pitkin advocates for gathering story material. Professor Pitkin's article next month is entitled: "How to Finish Plots."

Articles by H. Bedford-Jones and Chauncey Thomas are already in type for the next issue, and a choice will be made from several valuable contributions to fill out the contents. Frederick Palmer, screen-writing authority, will have something interesting to say to photoplay writers. David Raffelock will be represented in his technical series as usual.



# Arthur Stringer Advocates Systematic Storing of Plot Material

*But the Author of "The Prairie Wife" First Gets a Character in Mind, and Then Shapes a Plot Around the Character*

By Arthur Chapman

**A**RTHUR STRINGER, one of the most successful of present-day writers of short-stories and novels, is a great believer in system—that is, system plus whatever natural gifts may have been granted you.

Also he believes in following up apparently slight "leads" which, in mining parlance, may develop into ore bodies of unsuspected richness.

Mr. Stringer doesn't advance these ideas didactically. They came out in the course of an interview with him recently in New York. He doesn't announce any infallible rule for success; but no man can have a career beginning with journalism and carrying through a score of years of uninterrupted writing of fiction and verse, without experience which should prove of value to other writers.

The manifestations of life which interest Mr. Stringer the most are those to be found in the West. Not in the manufacturing Middle West, but in the vast new country which has the Rocky Mountains for its central physical line. It is easy to gather Mr. Stringer's preference from the enthusiasm with which he talks about the far West. It is hardly necessary to say that the author of such a notable trilogy of works as "The Prairie Wife," "The Prairie Mother," and "The Prairie Child" knows the life of which he has written in such absorbing detail. Mr. Stringer has a ranch in Alberta. He likes to talk about it and the life it represents. His admiration for the Western type of character is unbounded—with exceptions, such as in the case of the person or persons unknown who recently made off with a large amount of barbed-wire fence from the Stringer ranch. But it was suggested to him that perhaps this theft of barbed wire

would not represent a total loss, as it might be the basic idea of a story which would pay for the stolen material, with something over.

Even slighter things have suggested ideas which have been woven into short-stories and novels by Mr. Stringer. The Western trilogy which has been mentioned had its beginning in an incident much less consequential than the stealing of a barbed-wire fence. It started from an episode which Mr. Stringer related as follows:

"I called it 'The Egg on the Spoon.' It was a story about the sort of incident that might happen on a ranch. I wrote the story about an Eastern girl who married a Western rancher and who became oppressed with the loneliness of the life she had taken up. The monotony of existence in her new surroundings was telling on her, though she made no outward protest. Her husband was in the habit of helping her with the dishes after every meal. One day they were washing the dinner dishes. He was in a hurry to get back to the fields. He was doing the washing and she was drying the dishes. He threw over a spoon which had not been thoroughly washed. There was some egg clinging to it. She held up the spoon and then threw it back in the dish-water and the storm broke. The egg on that spoon brought out all her pent-up feelings. That short-story was expanded into a novel, called 'The Prairie Wife.' The book seemed to call for a sequel, and then came 'The Prairie Mother.' The demand seemed to be for another, so I wrote 'The Prairie Child.'"

**I**T IS only fair to Mr. Stringer, who is the most modest of men and who never would hint at such a thing himself, to say

that these books have been among the most popular and talked-about serials printed in years. The third book of the trilogy has been appearing as a serial in *The Delin-eator* and presents big problems in a masterly way.

"I wouldn't set up my methods of writing as something for others to follow," said Mr. Stringer, "because they might not always work out successfully. I mean particularly in shaping up a story. I find that I begin a story not so much from plot as character. I get a character fixed in my mind and around that character I begin to shape a plot. That is not in accordance with orthodox rules, which call for plot development first, I believe. But it seems to be my way of working, and it is advanced for whatever it may be worth to other writers.

"I don't believe a person should write about places without having first-hand information concerning those places. It is so easy to get the atmosphere wrong in little things which may not seem important but which in reality are vital. A story may illustrate what I mean. A young man in Canada, who was taking up authorship, sent me some stories for criticism, particularly with regard to New York atmosphere. Two of the stories were about the theater. One of them told about a youth from out of town who had bought tickets for himself and the girl to whom he was engaged, presumably for a Shakespearean performance. He had seen the bill in a window announcing such a performance and had bought the tickets, only to find, after they had entered, that the show was a burlesque of a risque sort, which prompted the young lady to give back her engagement ring. It seems that the poster which he had seen, and on the strength of which he had bought his tickets, was for *the year before*. This might have held good in his home town, but when one considers how these bill-snatchers along Broadway never leave a poster an hour longer than necessary, it will be seen that the young man had made a fatal mistake in his story, due to the fact that he did not know the life about which he was attempting to write.

"His other story was about a young man who was buying tickets for a Broadway show with his last two dollars. One of the dollars fell, while he was making the purchase at the box office, and rolled under the

sidewalk. Of course they don't have board sidewalks in New York, and it is seldom that one sees a silver dollar in the East, where paper money circulates exclusively. That was another mistake—a small matter perhaps, but enough to cause an editor to send back the story. Such reasons for rejection cannot be explained by busy editors. The contributor must fortify against such possibilities by knowing the place which figures in his story."

Getting a reputation for writing a certain line of stories is apt to prove awkward in some cases, Mr. Stringer observes out of his own experience. Recently he took a story to an editor—one of several stories for which he had contracted. The story was accepted, but the editor remarked:

"This isn't the kind of story we expected to get from you. It is a New York story, whereas you are a prairie man."

Yet only a few years ago Mr. Stringer was being called upon to write crime stories which had a New York setting. It happened in this wise:

"Up to that time I had not written any short-stories," said Mr. Stringer. "One day, when I was in a dentist's office having a tooth filled, the dentist, who was a friend of mine, said: 'Arthur, I've just lost three hundred and fifty dollars owing to the operations of some wire-tappers.' Then he went on, while he was at work, and told me all about how he came to lose the money, and how the wire-tappers operated. I became interested in the theme, and wrote a short-story, based on what my dentist friend had told me. I called it 'The Wire Tappers.' It was accepted and led to requests for more stories about crime and criminals. The short-story was expanded into a book. Other short-stories about criminals were written. I did not know any more about criminals than the average newspaper man, but I found myself fairly forced to learn about them and their ways, so that I could write of them understandingly. But it was awkward to have one type of story fastened on me so completely. I cast about as soon as possible for other material."

MR. STRINGER finds an endless source of inspiration in the newspaper. He keeps clippings of news stories which contain fiction possibilities. These are classified under various headings. He has a big,

old-fashioned desk with pigeonholes. In these pigeonholes he files newspaper articles under such headings as safe-breaking, smugglings, gem thefts, and various other phases of crime. He has special compartments for stories and articles dealing with finger-printing and detective-bureau work in general, also with prisons and prison procedure. He has been collecting such material for fifteen years and finds it invaluable.

"Some clipping which I made ten years ago may be the basis of my next story," said Mr. Stringer. "As a matter of fact I am always about three books ahead. I get an idea for a plot, a character, or even a phrase, which fits in with a certain book that I may have in mind. I file this away, and when I come to the actual writing I have a mine of material at hand. It is only necessary to sift out and arrange. I clip articles from the magazines as well—articles on travel, on Paris life, roping, bronco-busting—anything that is interesting. The newspapers and magazines afford a storehouse of ideas which should not be neglected. Of course it is not wise to take an idea that is too patent. An instance is found in the story about the dog that retrieved the stick of dynamite which the animal's master had thrown in the water. I remember clipping that story. It was used as the basis of a story by Jack London, I believe, and also by some other well-known writer. The two stories came out about the same time. It was a case of using a thing that was a little too obvious."

Mr. Stringer writes one thousand words a day. This is first draft only. He puts in much time on revision. He composes on the typewriter, as he says it seems to represent the happy medium, the pen being too slow and dictation leading to a diffuseness which means a lot of extra editing and cutting down.

"Of late I have been devoting one week each month to writing verse," said Mr. Stringer, who is the author of three books of verse, "Pauline and Other Poems," "Hephaestus and Other Poems," and "Irish Poems." "I had not been doing any verse-writing, but came to the conclusion that I was making a mistake. If one has an inclination for a certain thing, he should do it. I think that is particularly true of writing verse. I am half Irish, and I have been

writing more Irish poems. Verse-writing, I believe, will be a great help to any writer who is inclined toward it, if for nothing else than helping him in the choice of words."

IT IS not a good idea to put one's entire energies on a single story, Mr. Stringer finds. By keeping two stories going at once he finds a sort of mental relaxation which is helpful. Also he advises the young writer not to send anything out until at least four or five manuscripts can be sent on their way.

"A rejection has a particularly disheartening effect when it happens to the only story a person has out," said Mr. Stringer. "If there are others still to be heard from the blow is softened."

"An author is handicapped if he has little chance to meditate. That is why I abhor New York as a place to work in. The distractions are so many that it is difficult to get one's mind settled. Of course there are some writers here who manage to shut themselves up and dissociate themselves from their surroundings, but they are rare. On that account I like the West as a place in which to work. I believe every author ought to spend a lot of his time sitting on a rail fence, thinking. Or, better than that, try gardening. That is a great thing for the imagination. When you have reached a hard place in a story, just stick a scratch-pad in your pocket and go out and rake or hoe around in your garden, and the first thing you know you will be writing things down."

Mr. Stringer is big and sunburnt—the typical outdoor man. Since last November he has been doing his writing at Mountain Lakes, New Jersey, where he has a three-acre place, about thirty miles from New York city. He seldom comes to town and when he comes does not stay long. In his conversation his admiration for the Western type of character is a frequently recurrent note. He likes the way they meet their problems, those Westerners—particularly the ranch people in these days when there are real problems to be met. But he knows New York and New York life just as well.

MR. STRINGER was born in London, Ontario, in 1874. He was educated at Toronto University and at Oxford. He became a reporter on the *Montreal Herald*



and, coming to New York, was with the American Press Association from 1898 to 1901. For a year he was literary editor of *Success*. Then he began writing fiction. He has a notable list of short-stories and novels to his credit. Besides the books which have been mentioned he has written:

"The Even Runner," "Watchers of Twilight," "A Study in King Lear," "The Loom of Destiny," "The Silver Poppy," "Lonely O'Malley," "Phantom Wires," "The Occasional Offender," "Are All Men Alike?" "The Woman in the Rain," "The Wine of Life," and others.

# The Mathematics of a Book

*The Publisher's Profit on Each Book Sold Is Less Than Eight Cents; Where Does the Rest of the Money Go?*

By William Harlowe Briggs

*Director and Executive Head of the Literary Department of Harper & Brothers*

PERHAPS the greatest mystery which confronts the new writer—on the practical side of his work—is the astonishing fact that he gets only 20 cents out of a book that sells for \$2.00. Who gets the rest, and why? It is natural for the new author to think that the publisher gets the other \$1.80.

The mathematics of a book are very simple, and I may say they are very often tragic. A good example to use in getting at these figures is the popular novel. The novel has been selling at a retail price of \$2.00 and is still selling at \$2.00 in most cases. This retail price is the figure used by the dealer and publisher for the purpose of discounts—and it is on this full \$2.00 retail price that the author's royalties are based.

Dealers' discounts in the book trade average about 40%, and 40% taken from \$2.00 leaves us \$1.20. Credits to dealers in the book business are for considerably longer periods than in almost all other lines—but for the moment we may put that aside and say that the publisher ultimately receives this \$1.20 for each copy sold. From this amount we must deduct, in the case of a new author, a royalty of at least 10% of the full retail price—that is, 20 cents. This leaves \$1.00.

The first item to come out of this remain-

ing dollar is the manufacturing cost of the book. In the case of this new author, we will say that 3,000 copies are printed and 2,000 copies bound, and that all of them would be sold in the course of time. On this basis it would cost approximately 42 cents a copy to manufacture the book—that is, 42 cents for the materials and labor used in connection with this particular book. That leaves us 58 cents. It is necessary now to provide for the overhead—that is, the cost of doing business, expenses of administration, rent, etc. In the book business this overhead is generally figured at 25% of the price received, although some publishers have proved that their overhead is nearer 30%. Therefore, we take 25% of the \$1.20 received from the dealer—that is, 30 cents—from the 58 cents remaining after the cost of manufacture has been deducted.

THIS leaves the publisher 28 cents. He must now sell the book. Out of this 28 cents he must meet the expenses of whatever advertising campaign he puts into our author. Twenty cents a copy would mean that he had \$600.00 available for advertising purposes—not a large sum for launching our new author. 20 cents from 28 cents leaves the publisher 8 cents; after paying for only the initial \$600.00 worth of advertising. Even this cannot be called profit, for

out of the edition of 3,000 copies the publisher must give away several hundred books for review and to buyers and persons in the trade who must read the book in order to aid in its exploitation. These expenses, of course, the author is never asked to share. The actual return to the publisher—if every copy available of the entire edition is sold—if every dealer pays his bills on time—if there has been no mad plunge on advertising—with every one of these conditions favorable, the publisher's profit on each copy is, therefore, something less than 8 cents.

Many novels, of course, do not sell out their first editions. The advertising is a total loss and the remaining stock can be sold as remainders at about 10 cents a book. These failures must be carried by the occasional book which sells out its first edition, goes into a second—and perhaps a third.

In the case of the exceptional book which is a success, all the copies are sold except those given away in the trade and for review. On each copy the author makes 20 cents and the publisher 8 cents. But another factor enters into even the successful book—advertising. We have allowed in our figures only \$600.00 for this purpose. A good many times that sum must be spent before much is obtained in the way of practical results—that is, sales stimulated by advertising. So the publisher's 8 cents a copy will disappear—and a good many 8 cents along with it. And the publisher will be glad of it, too. It means that—if his judgment is sound—the eight cents will come back later when the author's second novel is published.

ALL who are familiar with the subject know how disappointing this second novel sometimes is. Often it is so disappointing that there is never a third novel. The one-book man and woman is quite common in America—perhaps more common here than in England, where the profession of writing fiction is taken very seriously.

No publisher would be justified in these experiments with new authors if he were not looking to the future. The present returns, both in money and in pride of achievement, are altogether too meager for the outlay, and a good many publishers believe that the odds are heavily against them and they do very little publishing in the field of

popular fiction.

I know a good many publishers, but there is no millionaire among them—and I think it is safe to say that the business of general book publishing is the only large industry in this country which has not produced a millionaire.

So much for the mathematics of a book. We have taken a new novel—a case more or less typical. But the largest element is not mathematical—it is the element of chance. Most books are failures financially. You will say that in many cases they ought to fail. Perhaps so. There are certainly too many books in the world. But who is to have the job of saying what books should fail, or, to put it more directly, what books should not be published? Probably there are no two persons who would make the same selections for the cemetery of unborn books.

There is a startling analogy between theatrical productions and book publishing. Public taste—more than that, public taste of the very season or moment—very often makes or breaks the success of a play or a novel. Charles Frohman said that if one play in five which he produced was a success he could still remain in business. It would require more than one success out of five plays produced to make him wealthy, and when Charles Frohman died the executor found that his liabilities were considerably more than his assets.

## NEW BOOKS

**STORIES EDITORS BUY AND WHY.** Compiled by Jean Wick. Small, Maynard and Company, Boston. \$2.00.

Thirteen stories that were printed in leading fiction magazines last year. The stories, selected by the editors themselves, represent their choice of the kind of story most suited for their magazines. At the end of the volume is given a comprehensive survey of the fiction market through personal letters sent to Miss Wick by editors of fiction-buying magazines.

**LETTERS ON CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN AUTHORS.** By Martin MacCollough. The Four Seas Company, Boston. \$2.00.

An unconventional critical study in letter form of some leading figures in contemporary literature. Writers who are eager to learn what a capable critic considers the essential qualities of merit in fiction, poetry and essays by such writers as Dreiser, Mencken, Willa Cather, Frank Harris, and Cabell will find this little book worth reading.

## The Literary Market

(Continued from page 3)

*The Penn Publishing Co.*, 925 Filbert St., Philadelphia, is in the market for novels of 60,000 to 80,000 words, and juveniles of 40,000 to 80,000 words. "This company," the editors write, "desires especially stories of adventure, mystery, the sea, the Southwest, and old-fashioned love stories." The Penn company is notable for its careful consideration of submitted material and its courteous letters telling why rejected manuscripts are not available. An early reading and full consideration is assured by the company to each manuscript submitted.

*The Electric Publishing Company*, a subsidiary of the National Radio-Homes Service Corporation, Limited, Toronto, Canada, will begin, in July, the publication of a new monthly magazine to be known as *Radio Life*. Alexander M. Moore is reported to have resigned his post with *Motor Trade*, Canada, to become business manager of *Radio Life*.

*The Photodramatist*, I. W. Hellman Building, Los Angeles, announces an enlargement to more than twice its present size, beginning with its July number. The magazine will contain several new departments and will no longer be for scenario writers alone but will have a general appeal to all who write or aspire to write.

*Lieber & Lewis*, book publishers, 21 Vandewater Street, New York, write: "We want novels with literary and popular appeal, of about 90,000 words; collections of short-stories averaging about the same length. We publish some books of a serious nature, and occasionally a book of verse. Our specialty is the American novel. We do not want inconsequential, light drivel. We pay royalties, or in some cases purchase the manuscript outright, depending upon the material and the author."

*Motion Picture Magazine*, 175 Duffield Street, Brooklyn, desires articles of 1500 to 5000 words based on motion pictures, also verse, jokes, skits, and anecdotes based on motion pictures. Payment is at varying rates on publication.

*The National Baker* of Philadelphia will be consolidated with *Bakers Weekly*, published by the American Trade Publishing Company of New York, about July 1st.

*The Forum*, 354 Fourth Avenue, New York, according to George Henry Payne, editor, "is always in the market for articles on our Broadening Social Fellowship, our Economic Questions, our Spiritual Life, our Commercial and Industrial Problems, our Ethics and Philosophy, our Educational Problems, our Changing Political Map, our Leaders in Affairs, also for short poetry, particularly if interpretative of current themes and interests."

*Social Progress*, 205 W. Monroe Street, Chicago, Caroline Alden Huling, editor, asks that the following notice be published: "Social Progress is overstocked with all classes of matter and will not be in the market again before October next. A change in editorial policy prevents the acceptance of more contributions for a time."

*The Christian Endeavor World*, 41 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston '9, Mass., Amos R. Wells, editor, writes: "We want general classes of material; short-stories of about 3500 words, serials of twelve to twenty-four chapters, each chapter about 3500 words, poems, particularly nature and narrative types, and illustrated sketches. We also run each one article of about 600 words on each of the following subjects: biography, travel, the Bible, missions, science, literature, history, Christianity, and the United States, including the departments of the government. Our usual rate is about 1/2 cent per word. *The Junior Christian Endeavor World* is only a three-page monthly and we are always greatly over-supplied with material for it."

*Popular Mechanics*, 6 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, H. H. Windsor, editor, "offers a market for articles of 100 to 2000 words on new developments in the fields of science, mechanics, industry, and discovery. Payment is made on acceptance at rates varying with the interest of the material."

*Science And Invention*, formerly *Electrical Experimenter*, 233 Fulton Street, New York, desires new scientific articles written in popular style, not exceeding 1500 words; also short-stories of a scientific nature. Payment is on publication at from 1 to 2 cents per word.

*Fruit, Garden & Home*, Des Moines, Ia., is a new agricultural publication soon to be launched by E. T. Meredith, publisher of *Successful Farming*.

*Picture Play Magazine*, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York, Charles Gatchell, editor, writes: "We confine our material to articles by specialists who reside either in New York or Los Angeles, where they are in close touch with the motion-picture industry. Contributions from other persons are not desired."

*Action Stories*, 41 Union Square, New York. J. B. Kelly, editor, reports that it is at present overstocked.

Louis Evan Shipman has succeeded Tom Masson as managing editor of *Life* according to word from a correspondent.

*The Independent*, 140 Nassau Street, New York, with which *The Weekly Review* was recently combined, pays at the rate of 1 1/2 cents a word for articles on up-to-the-minute problems, and occasionally for poetry, articles on architecture, art, precious stones, archeology, etc. Payment is made upon publication.

*Catholic Educational Review*, 1326 Quiney Street, Brookland, D. C., announces that its plans have been perfected for 1922 and that practically no more material will be purchased.

The following magazines have suspended publication: *Dramatic Mirror*, *New West Magazine*, *Pacific Sportsman*, *Photo Drama*, *Postal Service Magazine*, *People's Post*, *The Westminster*, *Spectator*, *Fashion Art*, *World's Welfare*, *St. Louis Lumberman*, *Southern Motoring*, *American Weekly*, *Mining Investor*, *California Weekly*, *Rosebud Monthly Review*, *Southern Marine Journal*, *West End Magazine*, *U. S. Army Recruiter*, *Southwestern Mechanist & Engineer*.



# Of Course!

## A Fragment of Idealism

By Joseph Andrew Galahad

**T**HE sketch which follows was submitted by Mr. Galahad on March 21, 1922. A letter accompanying it said:

"Having read and enjoyed THE STUDENT WRITER for a long time, I am moved to try to send you an acceptable contribution.

"I have found much aid in the magazine, and the Market Tips are indispensable. As a matter of fact, the entire magazine is indispensable, and I shall not be without it as long as I am permitted to live."

Mr. Galahad was not permitted to live to see the manuscript published. He died on the 13th of April at the age of thirty-three. His brief life had been filled with pain and tragedy. His sister, Mrs. David S. Harvey, of Portland, Oregon, writes that he left behind six huge files packed full of poems; "I shall devote the rest of my life to seeing the work of my brother in book form," she writes. "All I want is to see his works before the public that had learned to love his valiant soul."

The files of The North American Review, Poetry, Contemporary Verse, The Lyric West, Voices, The Wave, The Bookmna, Life, and numerous other magazines contain a large number of his poems. Life, perhaps, used more of them than any other magazine. Mr. Galahad sought to encourage the writing of good poetry in America by offering through Contemporary Verse a prize of \$25.00 for the best Elizabethan sonnet of the year 1922, published in that magazine. This offer, his sister writes, will continue to hold. One of Mr. Galahad's most loved poems is his "Argosy," first published in Contemporary Verse in August, 1921. It is a mystical, dimly prophetic piece with a free lyrical, sometimes dithyrambic movement, and may be considered as in some sense an adumbration of the poet's lofty vision and his tragical career.

**T**HEY were sitting before the fire in the old grate, the three of them. Outside the wind, in a high glee over the black night, was howling disconsolately about the eaves; the rain was whirring against the window-panes noisily, crying to be let in. But the three before the grate did not take any notice of the weather. They were talking of a man who had died only the week before; died a pitiful failure—died by his own hand.

"I don't know," said the Lady, "I can't for the life of me think what he meant by it. But I know this much: that he was sincere in everything he did and that he gave the best that was in him."

The college Professor hitched uneasily in his chair, and the Poet looked up from his cushion on the floor, but neither of them spoke.

"He broke his heart because the world wouldn't listen," the Lady added slowly. "That is what killed him more than any other thing."

"The world will always listen to the man who really has something to say," the Poet interrupted softly. "But it don't do, you know, for a chap to give up just because

the editors couldn't see things his way. It may be there was something wrong with his way—radically wrong: and if he had listened to the editors a bit, instead of going clean off his head in that fashion, he no doubt could have adjusted it. I don't believe any man with a real message for mankind ever failed of getting a hearing, and of gaining an audience—if he had the bravery to go straight with his ideals."

"Ha!" ejaculated the Professor, "now you have said something! It does take bravery, with a big B, to keep faith with the things one believes in!"

"Yes." The Poet sat up on his cushion and a flare of light from the grate touched his forehead as he looked earnestly into the Professor's face. "But here is a question for you: is the Poet running true to form if he be not brave? It isn't possible. The Poet must have three things: great bravery, great ideals, and great faith. All of this outside of the divine fire, of course."

"Isn't all of that somehow a part of the divine fire?" the Professor asked with a smile. The Poet shook his head.

"No. The fire is the thing within that makes a man speak in words that eventually

must be heard. If the fire is there it is only a matter of time—maybe a thousand or so of years; maybe ten. But the man himself to succeed in the space of one little life must have bravery: the bravery to face the long wait—the eternal disappointments and rebuffs—the jibes of those who cannot see as far as he, and consequently cannot understand anything he says. All this comes with the fight for recognition. He must have great ideals: ideals to set before those coming after; else his poetry is empty and weak. He must have ideals to live, else he himself is unworthy to write them down. He must ever search for the great ideals in others and appeal to all of them, else his poetry falls short of its mission. And he *must* have faith! He must have faith in himself, in his work, and in his fellow man. Given these, the Poet cannot fail."

"Ah!" said the Lady. "But what of Love?"

"Love?" The Poet leaned back against the fireplace and raised his brows. "Isn't Love a part of great ideals? Tell me, my dear—how can a man have great ideals unless he have love? Love of beauty—love of sincerity—love of life—love of God—love of Love itself? Why, my dear Lady, great ideals are love!"

"There is another thing you have not mentioned which seems to me an essential to the Poet." The Professor lifted his hands above his head as he spoke, then settled back into his easy chair. The firelight made a halo of his white hair. "Tolerance. How can a man write things of beauty—how can he hope to reach his fellows—how can he believe he may ever touch the morals of Time—without Tolerance?"

"He can't!" The Poet smiled dryly. "And did you ever see a truly brave man who was not tolerant? I never have, and I have known many brave men. They go hand in hand, my friend. No man can be genuinely brave unless he first learns to be tolerant of the thoughts, ideas, and contentions of others. And when a man learns to be tolerant he automatically becomes brave. He can't be one without the other. Of course you understand I am speaking of bravery of the soul. Not that flash of animal bravado that makes a man leap in front

of a gun, or turn on a mad dog. That same chap might grow sick to death of the things that command bravery of the spirit. I mean the real courage that steadies a man's feet and sends him on year after year, in the face of the whole world's opposition, till he win his goal."

"I rather suspect you are right." There were tears in the Lady's eyes, and she turned her head that the Poet might not see them. "But, my dear friend—what of the Ultimate Reward?" The Professor looked at her quickly—and looked away again.

"Ah—that is another thing. That is another thing!" The Poet reached out and touched the Lady's hand with a slender finger. "But—I believe it comes to us all. With the enduring of pain (and the Poet suffers things of which no others ever dream) there comes a ready capacity for understanding. And the real inner subtleties of life bring a Poet the greater reward before the world ever knows him at all. One makes friends, you see: a company of friends—growing steadily out of the readers who see and understand the things he is trying to say, taking the time and pains to write and tell him of all that understanding: appreciations of the beauty of his thought and utterance. And that is reward. Once in a while some Lady meets him halfway on the inner planes of silence—hand to hand and heart to heart—and that is reward. Often he makes a staunch friend of the editors who are coming to know him; and that is reward. And once in a lifetime some man who stands great before the world, seeing in the things he has done something of the unutterable glory the Poet felt, calls out to him: 'Hail, Brother—I see what you are driving at. Well done! Well done!' And that—God! That is Reward!"

"Oh, you—you!" said the Lady, frankly dashing away the tears.

"I can't think of any argument just now," murmured the Professor. "So you must be right."

The Poet leaned his head against the Lady's knee, and there was a great light on his face. But all he said was—

"Of Course!"

# The Final Punch

## *The Lure of the Unexpected as Applied to the Closing of Fictional Narratives—When Trick Endings Are Legitimate*

By David Raffelock

LIFE is a subtle force that now and then flares up like a blaze in a dark night, revealing some inner meaning. Man becomes inured to everyday phenomena; the miracles of modern science become commonplace. But man in his great restlessness is ever seeking change, the startling, the unexpected. Ordinary men seek sensation in the various jazz offerings of today; cultivated men look for the flash in the dark that affords the more profound, electric sensation.

This lure of the unexpected finds two similar expressions in short-story writing. In both instances it is a little more than a device, something more vital to the theme than mere mechanics. However, the writer should become conscious of its value, its application and its power.

The lure of the unexpected is known in writing under various names: surprise, "kick," novelty, dynamic conclusion, punch. The application of punch to short-story endings was popularized by O. Henry, who employed the trick twist much in the manner of a magician who first convinces his audience that the silk hat is empty and then takes from it a rabbit, a hen, ribbons, and what not.

That is one phase of the punch ending, the most mechanical; it can be fitted on to any cleverly worked-out story. But punch finds expression in more than this device; it may be said to be that force, expressed through description, dialogue or action, which arouses the reader. It is opposed to the tranquil ending, or to any ending after which the reader may say as following a geometrical problem, *Quod erat demonstrandum*.

The writer should not get the impression that punch is something restricted to the ending. It is a desirable quality throughout the narrative. It may be produced by

queerly turned phrases, by incongruous figuration, by unique style, by unexpected incidents, by unusual characterization and dialogue.

In the present discussion, however, only the final punch is to be considered. At this point it is most effectively used, for it heightens the total impression of the story. It intensifies the emotion aroused or increases the feeling of enjoyment.

The popularity of epigrams, jokes, proverbs and verses that depend largely for their effect upon the final lines reveals the charm of final punch. Note the effect of the postscript in this excellent example of final punch taken from Dreiser's "The Genius."

"Dear Eugene: I got your note several weeks ago, but I couldn't bring myself to answer it before this. I know everything is over between us and that is all right I suppose. It has to be. You couldn't love any woman long, I think. I know what you say about having to go to New York to broaden your field is true. You ought to, but I'm sorry you didn't come out. I have cared, but I'll get over that, I know, and I won't ever think hard of you.—Ruby."

"I stood by the window last night and looked out in the street. The moon was shining and those dead trees were waving in the wind. I saw the moon on that pool of water over in the field. It looked like silver. Oh, Eugene, I wish I were dead."

Punch endings are secured by three general methods. They may be classified as:

*Endings contrary to desire.*

*Peculiar revelations—of character, idea, etc.*

*Trick endings.*

The ending contrary to desire nearly always involves unhappy features. It usually deals with a study of character. The reader's interest is aroused in a character who is striving to overcome some obstacle or to attain some goal. If the author makes it appear that success is coming and leads



his readers urgently to want that success, failure comes as a distinct shock.

John Dos Passos developed an effective ending of this sort in his powerful novel, "The Three Soldiers." Toward the last of the book John Andrews is shown apparently secure in his freedom after having deserted from the army in order to write music and escape from an unbearable environment. The sympathetic reader hopes that Andrews will never be taken. The last page shows Andrews arrested by the military police. This ending has punch. The present writer was unable to sleep half the night after reading that conclusion!

Another form of ending contrary to desire is one that simply leaves the situation unchanged. This ending is common to many of the modern realistic stories. Readers have been so "fed up" on stories of the "and - they - lived - happily-ever-after" type that they have come to expect a similar solution to every problem. A well-developed story of realism which shows that a desired change in the relations or destinies of the characters is improbable achieves a decided punch.

This kind of ending is satisfactorily employed by Michael Gold in his story, "The Password to Thought—to Culture" (*Liberator* for February, 1922). The story is of David Brandt, a factory worker who yearns for better things. But his environment is oppressive and there is little opportunity for escape. The final paragraphs are:

"Go out; put on your hat and coat and go!"

"But I want to read!"

"You won't! I won't let you. I should drop dead if I let you!"

David stared wrathfully at her for a moment, stung into anger by her presumptuous meddling into affairs beyond her world of illiteracy and hope. He was about to speak sharply to her, but changed his mind with a weary shrug of his shoulders. He put on his hat and coat and wandered aimlessly into the East Side night, not in obedience to his mother, but because it was easier than to sit here under the impending flow of her nightly exhortations.

Stories of character, mood or idea often gain an added effect or punch following the climax by a new revelation of character or idea that seems to illuminate or emphasize that which has gone before. Such a revelation has dynamic force, for it hammers home a final impression by contrast, repetition, or similar device. It often has no essential

relationship to the climax. It is like a punch in the stomach after the knockout uppercut has been struck.

J. D. Beresford employed this type of ending for a peculiar story, "Powers of the Air" (*The Seven Arts* for October, 1917). He tells about a unique character who warns a young man not to go to the cliffs in a storm because of the mysterious powers of the air. But the young man goes and he returns triumphant, conscious of his superiority over the older man. The last paragraphs are:

He stood in the doorway, braced by his struggle with the wind; and his young eyes were glowing with the consciousness of discovery and new knowledge.

Yet he cannot deny that I showed him the way.

Trick endings are those brought about by a conscious attempt on the part of the author to lead the reader to expect a certain ending entirely different from that which is actually employed. This may be accomplished in various ways, but in general, trick-endings stories are of three kinds.

*Unexpected explanation of an event.* The formula is: A series of events to some extent familiar to the reader, suddenly revealed as having an entirely unexpected significance. An excellent example is "The Great Cipher," by Melville Davisson Post (*The Red Book* for November, 1921). The narrator tells of a diary kept by an explorer who died in an African jungle. Apparently the writer was demented. He told of human creatures with invisible bodies, of a strange malady, of pygmy savages. At the last the narrator reveals that the diary is not an actual account of a trip, but a cipher message accusing the two white men accompanying the explorer of a plan to murder him.

*Concealing intended solution behind an apparently limited choice of actions.* The formula for this type is a situation presenting two or more possible courses of action which are kept prominently before the reader, whereas the intended outcome is held in the background, to be "sprung" at the close of the story. Many detective stories follow a formula similar to this, leading the reader to believe that the guilt lies between certain characters who are under suspicion, but finally fixing it upon another character who was apparently not connected with the crime. "The Obligations of Win Foo," by

Robert E. Hewes (*Brief Stories* for April, 1922), prepares thus for such an ending. Win Foo is hired by each of two business rivals to kill the other. Of course they do not know of Win's double employment. Win Foo puzzles long over which duty he should fulfill, and seeks the aid of sages. He finally solves the problem unexpectedly in his own way by killing *both* men.

*A contrasting final incident.* This type is one of the most interesting and follows this plan: An initial incident is developed which leads the reader to expect a certain course of action. In the final incident the leading character does something directly opposite.

"Conscience," a short-story by Phillip E. Stevenson (*Brief Stories* for February, 1922), has a clever ending of this type. Watson is revealed as a man of conscience. A friend comes to his office and breaks the news that Watson's wife has run away with another man. Watson is evidently greatly shocked, beaten. The friend is afraid he will commit suicide, but Watson hurries him off. Then he grabs the telephone and calls a number. He tells the woman at the other end of the wire that his wife has left him. His conscience is clear now. They can go away together.

Although trick-ending stories are in a measure mechanical, the final punch is not something tacked on, but, as has been seen, is a result of careful and skillful planning, to lead up to the punch at the end.

Magazines are continually seeking stories that have surprise punch in the endings. The use of trick endings can be learned by the majority of writers after some practice. The other types of punch endings are more difficult to master, for they are part of the natural development of the material of the story.

The author must understand the character of his story and write a punch ending only because it is a logical development, not because it is sometimes an effective device.

Such endings may, however, be employed to rejuvenate many old themes by giving them a new twist punch.

O. Henry, according to the belief of many, almost killed the effect of the trick ending by so frequently resorting to it. The final punch is an artistic achievement, and authors should not permit it to degenerate into anything less than that. It should be poignant and plain. It impresses, for it is a flash of light in the dark. Often it is a brief summary of a human experience.

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# What Situations Are Censorable?

*With Some Thoughts by Rupert Hughes on the Folly  
of Trying to Put an End to Vice  
by Concealing It*

**By Frederick Palmer**

*President of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation, Los Angeles*

**C**ERTAIN situations in "Camille," redone for pictures under the title of "The Red Peacock," a Continental movie featuring Pola Negri, were recently censored by the Pennsylvania Board of Film Censors. Which brings up the mooted question of what is censorable material from the standpoint of pictures. Suicide, burglary and arson, material reflecting upon the National Government, the white slave traffic, the struggle of capital and labor, are in this class. So also are stories which cast reflection on race or creed, others of a morbid character, still others in which evil triumphs over good.

In Pennsylvania, owing to the presence of the board mentioned above, it is said that in pictures no woman can be shown smoking, or making a layette for her unborn child. As Mr. Rupert Hughes says: "The established censors have already passed beyond the censoring of fiction material. They are cutting out expressions of political opinion. They have in many, many cases cut out new pictures and modified educational films. \* \* \*

"While the present wave of mob violence toward the pictures will turn shortly toward some new excitement," he continues, "let us not permit the wave to leave upon the shore cumbersome monstrosities that will not be easily moved.

"A council of few men terrified by noisy moralists can carelessly vote an institution into the laws that will take many councils to vote out again.

"The worst of it is its futility. Any sane man knows that every single evil that we abhor today is as old as mankind. Yet the movies are only twenty years old. That must mean something to anybody who reasons concerning cause and effect.

"If you kill the movies, you will still find vice mocking and flourishing.

"There is one man whom the world re-

gards as having done more to redeem children from vice and to set on foot sane and effective cures for juvenile wickedness than all churchmen in history.

"This very day I received from him a letter in which he said: 'If you want to get me wildly excited, just talk about this "darn" fool censorship.' When he talked frankly to a body of ministers against censorship, from his vast knowledge of juvenile evils, and from the vast beauty of his love for children, the ministers howled him down—as recently in this city they sang and shouted down another minister who pleaded for brotherly love and justice.

**"FREEDOM** of art and speech and parable and thought are precious beyond our understanding. Our generation has never known the horrors of a church-ruled state or of domination by religious denomination. It is very easy to let our jewel fall back into the deep ocean of past misery. It will not be easy to find it again.

"Possibly the best way to illustrate the lack of worthiness back of censorship is to enumerate herewith some striking examples of censorship incongruities.

"A monkey, not liking his ugly face when he saw it in a mirror, broke the mirror and said: 'Now, I am beautiful once more.' The censor, seeing vice depicted on the screen, would purify the world by preventing new pictures of sins as old as the world.

"'Little Women,' by Miss Alcott, is generally accepted as one of the sweetest, purest classics of child life. Yet Amy Lowell says that her parents would not let her read it because of its bad influence; she had to read it secretly at a neighbor's house. If her parents had been censors, 'Little Women' would have been heavily censored as a book, a play, and a film, in which three forms it has had immense success. This shows that once censorship is permitted



there is no limit to its mischievous insolence.

"When Charles Dickens wrote 'Oliver Twist,' London was so filled with pickpockets and their teachers that he made Fagin and his pupils immortal characters. When the book was dramatized the censors forbade the production because it would teach crime. London was already swarming with thieves before the book was written; yet the censors feared that it would create what is merely described. This is a typical bit of censorship logic.

"The censors are going to stop crimes by censoring the films. Why don't they put an end to diseases by burning the medical books that describe them?

"Divorces and other crimes increased in Philadelphia enormously last year. Yet all moving pictures are heavily censored in Philadelphia. If other states will only pass strict censorship laws the whole country will soon be as pure as Pittsburgh.

"What a pity they didn't have a motion-picture censorship in ancient Egypt. Then such vampires as Potiphar's wife and Cleopatra could never have learned their wicked ways from the nefarious films."

IN writing for the screen, however, the photoplaywright's concern is not so much with the censor as with his audience. He should remember that we go to the theater, first of all, to be entertained. When we read a work on philosophy or science, it is for the specific purpose of acquiring knowledge in the most direct and simplest way. But fiction, created by Fancy, is the relaxation of the race. Because it is based upon the fundamental emotional conflicts of the race, and because it deals with human beings struggling against odds, it is inspiring to each of us in our daily lives. It is the privilege of the fictionist to entertain us, and incidentally to inspire us. And the photoplaywright, with an audience of countless millions, has the opportunity for inspiring the race to new hopes, new dreams, and a finer kind of life. \* \* \* In order to appeal to so great an audience, however, one must base one's appeal upon the universal language of humanity—the emotions. \* \* \*

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the ascent to a crisis, and the fall to repose again. All human relationships describe such an emotional curve. A situation occurs in the course of dramatic action, when the characters are so brought together that their contrasts and conflicts are clear and dramatic, that the central character is placed in a dilemma in which he must make a choice, or in a predicament in which a change will be suffered, or is confronted with an obstacle to be overcome. It is im-

portant, therefore, in considering photoplay situations, that we bear in mind the necessity for presenting action that is pictorially interesting and conflicts that are clear and striking in pictures. The success of the photoplay, as a form of popular entertainment, depends upon the directness and clarity of its appeal. A photoplay situation may therefore be defined as the crisis of an emotional conflict that can be clearly presented on the screen by means of pictures; in simpler terms, a predicament which we understand when we see the actors on the screen. The following is a clear example: the unexpected, but logical, entrance of a husband at the moment his wife is entertaining her lover. The sight of the three persons in their proper places on the screen is sufficient to make us understand the situation—and we are at once on the alert to learn what the husband will do, what the wife will do, and what the lover will do.

IN considering a situation for use in the photoplay, one should test it in this way. Will it be clear in pictured action? Will every member of the audience be moved by it? Or does it depend upon words, or is it vague and ill-defined? In one of Constance Talmadge's pictures, "A Virtuous Vamp," there was a very brief but delightful situation which serves as a clear example of what a photoplay situation should be. In that story, the heroine had lost several jobs with a large insurance company because her smile and her eyes worked havoc on the men. At length the young president of the company, who thought himself a woman-hater, made her his stenographer. One of his friends warned him about her, but he was sure of himself. A little later a notorious dancer wanted to have her shoulders insured, and the president asked the girl if she knew whether "shimmy" was a dangerous dance. The girls demonstrated. Just then the president's friend entered. Not a word was necessary to explain the feelings of the characters, for it was very clear in pictured action. It is interesting to note that the audience appreciated such a situation a great deal more than any of the clever titles or mere incidents that occurred. A situation, whether comedic or dramatic, causes a very definite and enjoyable emotional reaction in the spectator.

## Professional Training

**M**R. THOMAS H. UZZELL, formerly Fiction Editor of COLLIER'S WEEKLY, and associate and manager of Professor Walter B. Pitkin, announces that he is giving professional training in short story writing by personal correspondence to those who cannot come to New York to study with him. This announcement is made in the hope of getting in contact with writers of promise. It is intended only for those who are very much in earnest, and are willing to face the truth about themselves and their work. Abilities will be diagnosed before instruction is begun. Inquiries will be gladly answered. Address:

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THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, Dept. 63  
Springfield, Mass.

# "Poor Professor"

*June Wit-Sharpener Is Productive of Ingenious Plot Solutions  
—Contest Appeals to Many—More  
Mystery for July*

ONE thing that kept the smile on ye contest editor's face throughout the reading of contributions to the puzzling wit-sharpener of this month, was the number of letters commending the contests. Sweet relief!

Rex Andrews, 221 S. Kenilworth Ave., Oak Park, Ill., wrote: "I hope you continue this department, since I have read outlines of these problems that contained more essence of genuine interest than many of the fully developed stories that are now running in the magazines." Now it's up to contestants to keep Rex interested by supplying us with good fiction.

"I do not see how any better scheme could be found for developing the aspiring would-be writer's talents," wrote Mrs. S. F. Walker, 609 S. Pleasant St., Georgeown, Ohio (one of the recent prize-winners), "than the combination formed by the instructive articles in the magazine, and the practice of working out the wit-sharpener problems."

The problem for this month follows.

Paul Grant, a young college professor, takes up his residence in a large apartment building. Soon after his arrival, police are baffled to account for the theft of valuable articles from several tenants. They suspect that the robberies are the work of some one living in the building. One night, absent-mindedly returning home, Professor Grant is surprised to find the door of his apartment standing ajar. Noticing an unfamiliar object on the library table, he picks it up, then, looking around, discovers that he has entered some one else's apartment, evidently having left the elevator at the wrong floor. Footsteps are approaching. Panic-stricken, he dodges into a clothes closet. Almost at once, the key is turned, and a moment later he hears a woman's voice excitedly phoning to the police: "Come quickly. I've caught the mysterious prowler. He slipped into my closet as I came into the room. I locked him inside. And my jeweled opera glasses are gone."

First prize was awarded to W. Arthur Williams, 111 Chaddock Ave., Hornell, New York, who achieved a good "kick" in his solution.

## First Prize Winner

Professor Grant realizes that appeal to his captor will be useless, that he must set his wits to work while waiting the arrival of the police. When they come, he is searched as a matter of course. Neither the opera glasses nor any other stolen article is found upon him. He then turns to the police and says:

"This is a frame-up, I feel sure. In order to prove my theory I suggest that you go to my rooms and search them. You may find some of the stolen articles planted in my room for all I know. I demand the search to satisfy suspicion and clear my name."

The police agree. They accompany him to his room which they search thoroughly. They find nothing and retire. As they are passing the room of his accuser she comes out, and having heard the result of the search, tells them to wait while she tries a little experiment of her own.

She goes upstairs quietly. A key is in the professor's door so that she is forced to mount a chair and peer into his room through the transom. What she sees causes her to go down and bring the police back with her. Gaining admittance they find the stolen articles in the floor radiator. It turns out that the woman is a detective who has learned that Grant's professorship is a blind for a life of clever theft and swindling.

Second prize went to Harry F. Webber, 1310 Welton St., Denver, Colo., who worked out a logical solution.

## Second Prize Winner

The police force door of closet and drag forth the professor, but opera glasses cannot be found. Object Grant picked up was cheap paper knife which nobody would steal. Grant establishes his identity, but is jailed for investigation, as possible accomplice of thief.

Third degree fails to elicit any evidence from him and he is released on bond, still under suspicion. Next day police search his apartment and find missing glasses in davenport. Paul is immediately charged with burglary and tried. On a technicality, the fact that burglary includes breaking into a house, his attorney succeeds in having case dismissed.

Because of the stigma of his crime, Grant's resignation is requested by the college board, and he is unable to find employment of any nature. With his good name gone, the future looks so black that he decides to live on what savings he has and turn all his efforts toward clearing his name. He finds criminology a very fascinating study and becomes deeply interested in it.

With Paul's arrest, thefts stopped in his apartment house, but later started in another. Paul secures job there as assistant janitor, and is startled to find woman who lost glasses living there under different name.

By carefully shadowing her he compiles evidence against her and finally catches her, red-handed, in the apartment of an absent tenant. His evidence makes conviction easy and she receives long sentence. On stand she admits that finding Paul in her apartment gave her idea of fastening guilt on him, so she planted glasses in his apartment while he was in jail.



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College board makes Grant offer of reinstatement, but he accepts, instead, offer from a national detective bureau as criminologist.

Mrs. Sadie F. Seagrave, Oakdale, Iowa, was awarded third prize. Her solution is ingenious.

#### Third Prize Winner

The woman leaves the room. Immediately thereafter steps approach the closet and Grant hears a whisper through the keyhole, telling him the bag is in the corner, for him to take it and be at Seven Corners at ten o'clock. The key softly turns, and footsteps hurriedly retreat. Grant has a flashlight, soon finds the bag, opens it hurriedly and finds all the stolen articles, including the jeweled opera glasses. He takes the bag, opens the door, turns the key again, slips unobserved into the hall and reaches his apartment. A few minutes later he descends and joins the crowd which assembled when the police arrived. The woman of the apartment and her maid appear non-plussed at finding the closet empty. The woman avers that the maid is trustworthy. Grant hears the maid's voice, however, and is sure he recognizes it. He is afraid to tell his story for fear the police will mistrust him, but he has a friend who was formerly on the police force and immediately communicates with him. They take a position on the corner indicated, well under cover. At the appointed hour a woman approaches whom Grant knows to be the maid. She loiters around uncertainly as if waiting for some one and finally starts to leave, but the ex-policeman and Grant accost her, and she breaks down, confessing that her lover has with her help committed the robberies, that he was to have called for the bag that afternoon, and that she thought it was he who had been locked in the closet by her mistress who returned unexpectedly. After releasing her supposed lover she had not dared linger lest her mistress learn she had been in the room. She herself had placed the opera glasses in the bag.

The problem for July presents another mystery for contestants.

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### WIT-SHARPENER FOR JULY

*Harold DeVere leaves his hotel after the evening meal to attend an important business conference at the suburban home of Raymond Goff, banker. While he is driving his car, now past the city limits, the flare of his lamps reveals Elaine Merton on the road. Harold knows the young woman and he takes her in his car. She seems to be suppressing some strong emotion. She refuses to talk, and the silence is broken only some minutes later when a shot from the bushes alongside the road punctures a tire. Elaine appears relieved and talks gaily. Harold drives on a short distance and then stops to fix the tire. He is puzzled over the shooting, for his presence at the meeting is not of great enough importance to warrant drastic action to keep him away. When he returns to the car, he finds that Elaine has disappeared. \* \* \**

**PROBLEM:** In not to exceed 300 words, work out this plot situation to an effective conclusion.

For the best development submitted a prize of \$5.00 will be given; for the second best, a prize of \$3.00, and for the third best a prize of \$2.00. Winning outlines will be published next month.

**CONDITIONS:** The plot outline as completed must contain not more than 300 words, exclusive of the original problem. The outline must be legibly typed or written. It will be returned only by special request, when accompanied by stamped envelope for that purpose.

Manuscripts must be received by the 15th of the month for which the contest is dated. Address Contest Editor, THE STUDENT WRITER, 1835 Champa Street, Denver, Colo.

# The Barrel

## *Out of Which Anything May Tumble*

**W**HY is the pay-on-publication magazine? The answer cannot be that the magazine which employs this policy is unable to pay on acceptance, because each accepted manuscript must be paid for eventually. True, the magazine gets the use of the money for a few more months, but its publishers must be short-sighted indeed not to realize that their loss of prestige with contributors far outweighs this consideration.

The average writer will much sooner submit his wares to a magazine which pays one cent a word on acceptance than to a magazine which pays on publication at two cents. In fact, the general tendency is to class all pay-on-publication magazines as makeshift markets to be tried only after the pay-on-acceptance field has been thoroughly canvassed.

This certainly results to the disadvantage of such magazines, giving them chiefly the shopworn and picked-over manuscripts from which to select.

Of course, there are certain types of periodicals that, from the nature of the material they use, must pay on publication. Contributors who submit matter to them do so at space rates, with the understanding that they are to be paid only for what is printed. The editor does not know in advance what this will measure up. Ordinarily such publications use the material within a month or less after its submission, so the delay works no hardship. But for the magazine which definitely accepts a manuscript at a stated price there is no justification for deferring payment till after the matter is published.

To test the matter out, let the publishers of any pay-on-publication magazine announce a new policy of payment on acceptance, even at a rate slightly below their former average. As a result of the altered policy, we predict that they will receive an influx of new material which will surprise them, and that it will average of better quality than they have been accustomed to find in their mails.

• • • • •

Certain members of the Authors' League of America used the pages of a recent number of their official bulletin to compose notes on the number of words they turned out in a year. Mrs. Lillian C. Garis claimed 400,000, but her record was eclipsed when Elmer T. Clark came back with a score of 900,000.

We have heard of other writers whose output in words was terrifying. Arnold Bennett, the English literary lion, calls half a million words a year "mere passable industry."

The very obvious comment to make about this torrential outpouring of words is: "What's the use? Fewer words and more quality would be a more worthy desideratum."

But we won't make the obvious comment. We will say, rather, that it is for the average writer a very good thing to turn out a great many words—especially a good thing for the beginning writer. He cannot use words too much, even if 98 per cent of what he turns out ought to go into the waste basket.

Of course, when it comes to a question of publishing, or even attempting to publish, a great many words, we encounter a different matter. Possibly the voluminous writers heretofore mentioned might have done better not to have published so much. But few young authors can write too prolifically.

• • • • •

Several readers have asked why "The Loafers' Club" has failed to appear recently in *THE STUDENT WRITER*. For their information—the discussions published in this department were actual proceedings of a real Loafers' Club, which has temporarily ceased to meet. Until it resumes operations, the department must perforce be suspended for lack of "copy."

• • • • •

**A** CORRESPONDENT writes to learn if we can tell anything about an alleged magazine syndicate with a lock-box address. The syndicate offers to criticize manuscripts "free of charge" and to give suggestions for the sale of suitable stories.

"I advised those who called the concern to my attention to disregard it," writes the correspondent, "for it seems to me doubtful, to say the least."

We are not familiar with the concern mentioned, but our advice would be a confirmation of that which has already been given—to disregard the company's offer as being "doubtful, to say the least."

The name of the concern does not matter, since its manner of advertising betrays its classification. Of course there must be a "catch" in the offer to give free service. Usually, the idea is to get writers to submit manuscripts, and then to promise publication of the material at the author's expense. Companies that employ this plan are trying to play upon the desire of literary aspirants to see their efforts in print—even if they have to pay for the privilege.

# THE HAMMOND

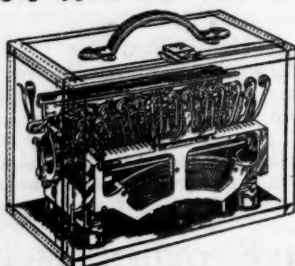
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# The Student Writer's Handy Market List of American Book Publishers

Several thousand firms and individuals each year issue books in America. The endeavor here is to list only those who are regularly in the business of issuing books for sale and who are to some extent at least in the market for suitable manuscripts.

Insofar as the information has been obtainable through a compilation of data and correspondence with the publishers extending over several months, the following list gives not only the correct address of the publishing houses represented but also the types of books issued and method of remunerating. This feature, we believe, makes it of real value to authors. A writer, for example, having a juvenile manuscript for marketing, will avoid useless submissions by sending it only to those publishers in whose listing the abbreviation "Juv" occurs. Novels, obviously should not be submitted to concerns publishing only technical works.

## ABBREVIATIONS EMPLOYED

AUTHOR'S EX	Company may require author to stand part or all of publication expense.
Juv	Juvenile books.
Nov	Novels.
P	Purchases manuscripts outright.
R	Pays author on the royalty basis.
REF	Reference books.
REL	Religious books.
SER	Books of serious nature such as biographies, travel, historical, scientific, sociological, political, etc.
SS COL	Collections of short-stories.
TEXT	Text-books.
Vs	Books of verse.

Figures following any given designation denote number of words preferred by the publisher in manuscripts.

Italicized words indicate the types of books in which the publisher specializes.

- ABINGDON PRESS, 150 5th Ave., New York. Rel song, Ser, Rel.
- ALLEN & BACON, 50 Beacon St., Boston. Text.
- ALTEMUS (HENRY) CO., 1326 Vine St., Philadelphia. Nov 30,000, Juv 40,000 to 50,000, Handbook. R.
- AMERICAN BOOK CO., 100 Washington Square, New York. School Text, Juv.
- AMERICAN SPORTS PUBLISHING CO., 45 Rose St., New York. Sports.
- AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION, 1816 Chestnut St., Philadelphia. Rel Nov, Juv, Rel, 20,000 to 70,000.
- AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY, 103 Park Ave., New York. Fiction, Rel, Juv.
- APPEAL PUBLISHING CO., Girard, Kansas, Socialistic, Radical. Not an open market.
- APPLETON (D.) & CO., 35 W. 32d St., New York. Nov 75,000 to 150,000, Ser, Juv, *Big Themes*.
- ARROW PUBLISHING HOUSE, 347 5th Ave., New York. Architectural, Technical.
- ASSOCIATION PRESS, 347 Madison Ave., New York. Rel, Inspirational; *Books with a purpose*.
- ATKINSON (WILMER) CO., 232 W. Washington Square, New York. Juv.
- ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS, 8 Arlington St., Boston, 17. Nov, Ser, Juv, Essays, Biology.
- AUDEL (THEO.) & CO., 63 5th Ave., New York. Technical, Mechanical, Electrical and Scientific handbooks.
- BADGER (RICHARD G.), 194 Boylston St., Boston. Nov, Ser, Text, Vs, Rel; occasionally SS Col and Juv; *Research*. R. Sometimes Author's Ex.
- BAIRD (HENRY CAREY) & CO., INC., 110 Nassau St., New York. Technical, Mechanical, Scientific and Industrial.
- BAKER (WALTER H.) & CO., 5 Hamilton Place, Boston. Plays, Material for Entertainments.
- BALL PUBLISHING CO., 147 Summer St., Boston. Ser, Essays, Vs.
- BARDEN (C. W.), Syracuse, N. Y. Educational, Text, Teachers.
- BARNES (A. S.) CO., 30 Irving Place, New York. Educational, Text, Music and Folk Dances.
- BARSE & HOPKINS, 23 E. 26th St., New York. Vs, Juv, Gift, Anthologies.
- BECKLEY-CARDY CO., 312 W. Randolph St., Chicago. Juv, Text, Recitations, Playlets, School-room helps.
- BENZIGER BROTHERS, 36 Barclay St., New York. Fiction, Catholic Rel, Juv.
- BOBBS-MERRILL CO. (THE), 18 Univ. Square, Indianapolis, Ind. Nov, Ser, Juv, Law, Belles-lettres, Vs, Text.
- BONI & LIVERIGHT, 105 W. 40th St., New York. Ser, Political, Nov, Travel, Educational.
- BOWKER (R. R.) CO., 62 W. 45th St., New York. Book-trade Ref books.
- BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA, NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS, 200 5th Ave., New York. Scout books.
- BRADLEY (MILTON) CO., 43 Cross St., Springfield, Mass. Books for children of all ages.
- BRENTANO'S, 5th Ave. and 27th St., New York. Nov 80,000, Ser, some Juv, Gift. R.
- BROOKLYN EAGLE PRESS, Washington and Johnston Sts., Brooklyn. Ser.
- BURT (A. L.) CO., 114-120 E. 23d St., New York. Juv.
- CALLAGHAN & CO., 401 E. Ohio St., Chicago. Law, law text.
- CENTURY CO. (THE), 353 4th Ave., New York. Nov, Ser, Travel, Essays, Biology, Juv.
- CHAUTAUQUA PRESS, Chautauqua, N. Y. Books for regular Chautauqua reading courses.
- CHENEY PUBLISHING CO., Washington. Ser. Not regular market.
- CLODE (EDWARD J.), 156 5th Ave., New York. Nov, SS Col.
- COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2960 Broadway, New York. Educational. Reference.
- CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE, Jefferson Ave. and Miami St., St. Louis. Rel. Not open market.
- COOK (DAVID C.) PUBLISHING CO., Elgin, Ill. Rel, Essays, Fiction, Sunday School Text.

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### Example of a thumb-nail criticism:

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- XIX. Literature.
- XX. Prices Paid for Fiction.
- XXI. Trade Names.
- XXII. Costs and Language.
- XXIII. New York.

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Franklin, Ohio

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# Missing Heirs

You may be one of them. Will you help in this nation-wide search by sending for the free Van Loan Questionnaire offered below?



MISS WINIFRED KIMBALL, of Apalachicola, Fla., received a \$10,000 check as first prize winner in the Chicago Daily News scenario contest. She is a student of the Palmer Plan, and writes: "I feel that much of my success is due to its practical instruction."

**T**HE Palmer Photoplay Corporation is in the position of a lawyer who has been commissioned to find the missing heirs to a great estate.

The motion picture industry *must* have new scenarios. It *must* have them, if it is to continue to hold its vast audiences. It *must* have them, if its great studios and investments are not to become worthless. It is willing to pay fortunes for these stories; it is ready to crown the successful scenario writers with fame and maintain them in luxury. Who are these people who can tell a story? Where are they?

To find an answer to these vital questions, the industry has commissioned the Palmer Photoplay Corporation to conduct one of the most exciting searches ever undertaken.

We use the words "exciting search" advisedly. Can you imagine anything more exciting than to find the talent that won the \$10,000 prize in a nation-wide scenario contest? To discover in a Montana housewife the power to tell a story and to hand her the producer's check as the reward of a talent which she did not know she possessed? Can you picture the surprise and delight of a Utah reporter, a private secretary in Pennsylvania, a Chicago Red Cross worker, when lifted suddenly to an earning power beyond their wildest dreams? Or of the inmate of a penitentiary whose scenarios are eagerly sought? These are actual incidents in this combing of the country for men and women with story-telling power.

And still the search goes on. Hun-

dreds of thousands of copies of the Van Loan Questionnaire must be distributed this year; will you send for your copy? You may be one of the thousands (out of the hundreds of thousands) for whom the rewards of this new era wait.

## The Van Loan Questionnaire— a big new invention

Not every man and woman can write stories for the screen. In the past many who had no real talent or chance for success have wasted time in fruitless trying. Such waste of time and money is no longer necessary. By an interesting new development it is now possible for you to know almost at once whether you have any gift of *creative imagination* and whether it will pay you to develop that gift.

The invention is a Questionnaire such as was used by the United States Army in establishing the qualifications of officers and men in the war. This Questionnaire has been created with special reference to the needs of the motion picture industry by H. H. Van Loan, the well-known Photoplaywright, and Professor Malcolm MacLean, formerly of Northwestern University.

We invite you, without obligation, to send for your copy of this questionnaire. We ask you to co-operate with the new forces in the motion picture industry by making this free test of your creative talent in your own home.

## We shall be frank with you

The Palmer Photoplay Corporation is the largest seller of motion picture scenarios in the United States. It is in business to secure scenarios for which producers will pay large sums.

The Educational Department of the Corporation is organized to train men and women of talent to a point where they can produce such scenarios. Therefore the Educational Department *must* and does deal very frankly with those who fill in the Questionnaire. If your talent is not sufficient to justify you in going on, you will be promptly notified.

If, on the other hand, you should be one of the thousands now unknown who are to be important factors in the second era of the motion picture industry, the facilities of the Educational Department will be placed at your disposal, if you choose to take advantage of them.

## At least test yourself— the test is free

Surely this simple test is worth trying. Failure to attain high rank in it involves you in no loss. You have merely invested a stamp and a planned hour of mental discipline. On the other hand, success with the Questionnaire may open the way to fame and immense reward.

Do not pass by lightly the chance to share in this second era of the motion picture industry. Send today for the Van Loan Questionnaire.

## PALMER PHOTOPLAY CORPORATION



PLEASE send me, without cost or obligation on my part, your Questionnaire. I will answer the questions in it and return it to you for analysis. If I pass the test, I am to receive further information about your Course and Service.

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